

SCRATCH

DJ ACADEMY®



Los Angeles Times

latimes.com

\$1.00 (ESTIMATED) AIRFARE HIGHER 90 PAGES © 2012 NYT

FRIDAY, AUGUST 31, 2012

REPUBLICAN NATIONAL CONVENTION



MARK BRETTEN/LOS ANGELES TIMES

State to target Web retailers for sales taxes

Board of Equalization is bulking up on auditors to go after merchants that don't collect the levies.

By MARC LEFSKKE, ANDREA CHASE AND RICARDO LOPEZ

The California tax man is smooth, and he's headed for the Internet.

State tax collectors are preparing to crack down on renegade Internet merchants who don't collect sales taxes, and nearly 100 new state auditors, lawyers and other specialists are being hired to help over the next three years.

The effort comes at a time when state and local governments are scrambling for money after cutting billions of dollars from bud-

gets residents live.

"This law is a giant step forward," said Jerome R. Horton, chairman of the state's tax collection agency, the Board of Equalization. "It will help California collect much needed revenue to support critical public services."

Enforcement also will help protect California's bricks-and-mortar stores — which already collect sales tax — from unfair competition abroad.

Some online shoppers who like making tax-free purchases on the Internet are less pleased by the crackdown.

"I would like to be able to buy something cheaper by not paying taxes," said Ann Cris, 63, of Long Beach. "But then again, I can see the state's point of view that this is lost revenue."

The law that prompted the new enforcement effort was part of a compromise

A DJ itch should be scratched

Photographs from Scratch DJ Academy

THE SCRATCH SCHOOL, which marks its 10th anniversary in October, was co-founded by Run-DMC's Jam Master Jay.

Fledgling spinmeisters learn the basics and beyond at West L.A.'s Scratch DJ Academy

BY MATT DONNELLY

In an anonymous strip of commerce in West L.A., beside a small bakery and a pet hospital, is a tribute to a staple of hip-hop and dance culture — the turntable. Up to 20 sets of hands turn wax-coated records into art inside the industrial, graffiti-painted walls of the Scratch DJ Academy.

In a world where "Jersey Shore" cast member Pauly D "spins" for a Britney Spears tour and takes home a seven-figure paycheck, and Connor Cruise, the 17-year-old son of Tom Cruise, books gigs on the Hollywood and international club circuits as C-Squared, the programmable iPod has made it so just about anyone can pose as a spin master.

But Scratch Academy, which will be celebrating its 10th anniversary in October, aims to take the experience back. Way back.

With a strong emphasis on the origins of the craft, turntables and vinyl, and a non-competitive, mentor-heavy learning environment, Scratch seems positioned as a purist institution with an acceptance of the future.

Born in 2002 in Manhattan's East Village, with legendary Run-DMC member Jason "Jam Master Jay" Mizell as co-founder, Scratch counts more than 100,000 graduates from its flagship and additional locations in Miami and Los Angeles.

It boasts a marquee-caliber faculty and celeb fans in Samantha and Marc Ronson, Jazzy Jeff, DJ Irie and

Scratch DJ Academy Los Angeles

Where: 2324 Cotner Ave.
Info: scratch.com

Snoop Lion. The school has spawned products including a coffee-table book and branded music-mixing software, and is even integrated into the 2010 video game title "DJ Hero 2."

But before big business: basics. "You go out nowadays and technology has made DJing so accessible for anyone," said TJ Mizell, son of the late Jam Master Jay and a Scratch instructor.

"I love when people come in and they know absolutely nothing about vinyl, taking those people and turning them into DJs—they're done in 18 weeks and they're incredible," Mizell said of the certification process, which takes four core classes and two electives.

"We embrace technology, but there's laziness to a point. I love to bring a production standpoint to [DJ sets], it brings them to a live-performance level," said Mizell.

Students seek a similar payoff, one that transcends the contemporary mainstream hit (which these days are rife with producer credits or guest appearances from massive DJ acts like Calvin Harris).

"I enjoy going out, gay clubs in

West Hollywood, straight clubs in Hollywood and Silver Lake, but Top 40 [is] a little too easy," said Bobby Boas, fresh off completing his second course in his trek to certification at Scratch's L.A. branch.

Most of his library is digital, which is spun under the alias Boy Hob, but Boas maintains that manipulating vinyl records and keeping his own sense of timing for mixing and song transitions is rewarding.

"There's so much going on in those headphones," Boas said.

But using a platform well doesn't necessarily make the best DJ, or the most popular.

"Having a DJ who can read the vibe of a room, adjust and get the crowd engaged is equally important as how skilled they are from a technical standpoint," said Jason Scoppa, creative director of SBE's Sayers Club.

"The problem is, anyone can be an iPod DJ, because everyone wants their taste validated. That's why you see celebrities ... why you see setups at your local restaurant, gym and clothing store. They're not necessarily good, just in demand."

There's that saturation again. How does a music venue establish hierarchy?

"Nobody really cares about quality anymore. It's about how many people you can bring out," Mizell said. "Factors like how you look and how you're dressed. Please — there are DJs that I know, from skills alone, [who] should be billionaires by now."

The Scratch culture talks an unpretentious talk, even when it comes to kinds of gigs.

"Ideally, I hope to get interesting kinds of jobs that don't limit me, but, hey, I'll take a song request. I'll play a wedding," said Boas.

"I want to go back to the old way," he concluded, "when DJs told a story."

He's not in the Cruise family, but that could be just as maverick.

matt.donnelly@latimes.com



Scratching for cash

Pauly D is world's 7th highest-paid DJ, earning 11M: Forbes

BY BRIAN NIEMIETZ
NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

Jersey Shore" star Pauly D is more than just a tanned face with a perfect blowout, spreading the GTL gospel — he is also on the list of top 10 earning deejays in the world, according to Forbes.com.

The reality TV star earned \$11 million last year, making him the seventh highest-paid deejay in the world, the magazine reported Thursday.

Adam Alpert, whose 4am Management company handles popular New York deejays like Mia Moretti and Jus-Ske, doesn't find it surprising that the mag rundown's highest-earner, Dutch mixmaster Tiesto, banks twice as much as Pauly D. But Alpert does consider Pauly D an "anomaly on this list" of 10.

"Four of these guys are American," he says. "Of the top 100 deejays in the world, maybe 20 are American. It's a whole culture [in Europe]. Kids that are 12 and 13 years old want to be Tiesto and Swedish House Mafia. It's like baseball to an American kid."

Alpert adds that while the other nine deejays on Forbes' list create their own music and play each other's creations at clubs, they wouldn't play Pauly D's mixups as his fame is more about Jersey-style hijinks with Snooki and the crew at MTV's shore house than musical acumen.

Scratch DJ Academy founder Rob Principe says his

10-year-old East Village deejay school has seen a significant increase in students wanting to learn how to earn like big-time house music deejays.

"They're playing massive arenas, stadiums and festivals," says Principe. "This is where the opportunities are going and where attention is being focused."

Principe points out that "David Guetta has more Facebook likes than Barack Obama right now." He also says he has no problem paying props to Pauly D.

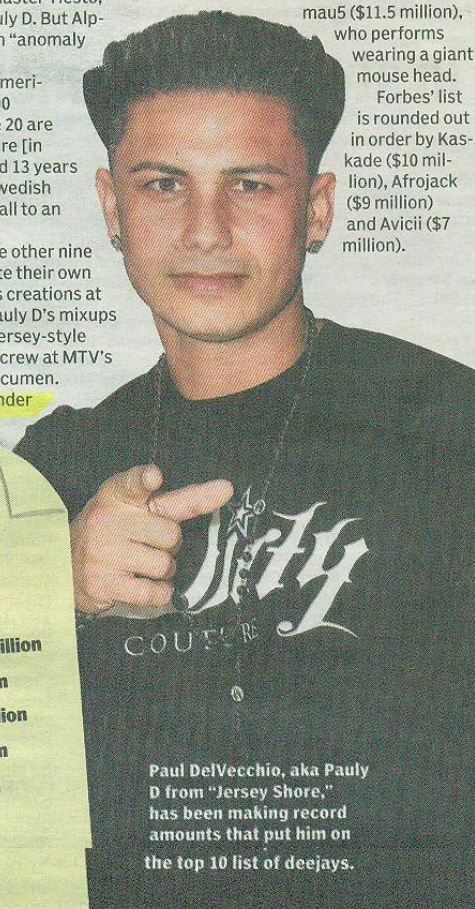
"I'll say it on or off the record: He's a legitimate deejay. He knows what he's doing."

According to the Forbes' article, the deejays on their list make most of their money from touring and benefit from having less overhead than rock bands that have instruments to transport.

Finishing between Tiesto and Pauly D on Forbes' list were L.A.'s deejay Skrillex (\$15 million), Scandinavia's Swedish House Mafia (\$14 million), France's David Guetta (\$13.5 million), Miami's Steve Aoki (\$12 million) and Canada's Deadmau5 (\$11.5 million),

who performs wearing a giant mouse head.

Forbes' list is rounded out in order by Kaskade (\$10 million), Afrojack (\$9 million) and Avicii (\$7 million).



Paul DelVecchio, aka Pauly D from "Jersey Shore," has been making record amounts that put him on the top 10 list of deejays.

According to Forbes.com:

1. Tiesto, \$22 million
2. Skrillex, \$15 million
3. Swedish House Mafia, \$14 million
4. David Guetta, \$13.5 million
5. Steve Aoki, \$12 million
6. Deadmau5, \$11.5 million
7. DJ Pauly D, \$11 million
8. Kaskade, \$10 million
9. Afrojack, \$9 million
10. Avicii, \$7 million